

Realm User Guide for Hayes Barton United Methodist Church

This guide is designed to help you use **Realm**, Hayes Barton United Methodist Church's secure online community platform. It is written from two perspectives:

- **Church Members** – to help you stay connected, manage your information, and engage with the life of the church.
- **Group Leaders** – to help you communicate, organize, and support your group effectively.

Quick Start: Church Members

Get connected in 10 minutes or less

1. Accept your Realm email invitation and create your login.
2. Add a profile photo so others can recognize you.
3. Review and update your contact information.
4. Check your privacy settings and choose what others can see.
5. Explore the Directory and your Groups.
6. Download the Realm mobile app to your Smartphone (optional).

Part I: Realm for Church Members

What Realm Is (and What It Isn't)

Realm is our church's secure, members-only platform for connection and communication. It allows you to:

- Stay connected with other members
- Update your contact information
- View and join groups
- Communicate with your groups and ministry teams
- Give online (if enabled by the church)

Realm is **not** social media. Your information is private and visible only to people and groups the church authorizes. Realm is an online ministry tool designed for real-time connection. It helps our church connect with you and you connect with us. If you consider yourself part of this church family, you'll love it. Realm allows you to manage your personal information and who is allowed to see it, control your giving, and keep in touch with the groups that matter to you.

If you would like to have access to Realm, use this form to send a request for an account to be created. Be sure to include the email address that you would like to use as your "login id" in Realm.

How to "Start" Realm / Realm Connect

Start Realm visit HBUMC.com click on [Members](#) on your computer or phone browser

Want to use the Realm function on your smartphone with an app? Go to your "store" and download Realm Connect - For Our Church. Note that if your phone is mature (ok, old), the version of the operating system (iOS (iPhone) or Android) might be too old and you can't download the app. You can always use the browser on your phone to link to [Realm](#)

Getting Started

1. **Accept Your Invitation**

You will receive an email invitation from Realm. Click the link and follow the steps to create your account.

2. **Set Up Your Profile**

Once logged in, take a few minutes to:

- Add or update your contact information
- Upload a photo (optional but helpful)
- Review what information is visible to others

3. **Download the Mobile App (Optional)**

Realm is available as a mobile app for both iOS and Android, making it easy to stay connected on the go.

Managing Your Information

Realm allows you to keep your information current, which helps the church communicate effectively. If an email is sent through Realm the communication will go to your email inbox associated with your account and will also be in your inbox within the Realm app.

You can:

- Update phone numbers, email addresses, and mailing addresses
- Manage household information
- Adjust privacy settings for what others can see

Why this matters: Keeping your information up to date ensures you receive important church communications and helps staff and volunteers serve you well.

Connecting with Others

- Use the **Directory** to find and contact other members – you can save a members information to your phone contacts
- Control what information is visible to others
- Message individuals directly through Realm (email or in-app)

The directory is intended to support community and care, not solicitation.

How to Add Your Picture on an iPhone using the Realm Connect App

- Open the **Realm Connect** app on your mobile phone and log in.
(If you do not have the app yet, download “Realm Connect” from your phone’s app store.)
- Tap **More** in the main menu.
This is typically found at the bottom of your screen.
- Tap the circle at the top of the screen that shows your initials or current profile photo.
- Select **My Profile**.
- Tap your profile circle again.
You should see a small **camera icon** on or near the circle. Tap the camera icon.
- Choose **New Profile Photo**.
- Select one of the options:
 - Take a Photo
 - Choose a Photo
 - Browse Files
- (If prompted, allow the app to access your camera or photos.)
- After selecting your photo, tap **Apply** or **Save** to confirm.
- Your photo should now appear in the church directory. If you’d like to change it later, simply repeat these steps to remove or replace it.

How to Add Your Picture on an Android using the Realm Connect App

- Open the **Realm Connect** app on your mobile phone and log in.
(If you do not have the app yet, download “Realm Connect” from your phone’s app store.)
- Click the "hamburger" icon (3 horizontal lines usually found in the top left of your screen)
- Scroll down and select the "Profile" menu option
- Beside your name, click the pencil icon (on the top right of the screen)
- Inside the round icon will be a camera icon that you should click
- You will be able to select an existing photo or take a new photo (look for the camera icon, usually in the top right of the screen).

- Once you have taken and/or selected the desired photo, you will be able to select it for your profile in the church directory (choose the "Apply" option)
- Not happy with the result? You can always remove the photo and start over!

How to Add (or Update) Your Picture on a Computer Browser

- Load a picture of yourself onto your computer's file system.
- One way to do this: Take a picture on your phone, attach it to a draft email on your phone, then log into your email account on your computer, open the draft email and save the attached picture to your file system
- Click to view the easy Realm instructions on how to "Add Your Picture"
- Want to change your existing photo? On the same page, scroll down to see instructions on how to "Update Your Photo"
- You will have some ability to "edit" the picture before saving it in Realm. Don't like the result? You can remove it and start over.

Need some help? Email Amy Piland apiland@hbumc.org

Groups and Ministries

Realm is the primary place to engage with church groups, such as:

- Small groups
- Ministry teams
- Classes
- Committees

From your Realm account, as a Group Member (Participant) you can:

- View groups you belong to
- See group announcements and messages
- Access shared files or resources (if used by the group)
- RSVP to meetings/events

From your Realm account, as a Group Leader you can:

- Manage Participants
- Send emails, photos, messages, events
- Mark Attendance

For more information – visit the Group Leader Guide

<https://help.acst.com/en/realm/guides/leaders/group-leader-guide>

Giving Through Realm

With online giving you may:

- Make a pledge
- Make one-time or recurring gifts
- View your giving history
- Update payment methods securely

Realm uses industry-standard security practices to protect your financial information.

Quick Start: Group Leaders

Your weekly Realm essentials

1. Log in and navigate to your Group page.
2. Review your member list and note new participants.
3. Post or send a weekly message or announcement.
4. Upload or link any resources for upcoming meetings.
5. Check messages for questions or pastoral needs.

Part II: Realm for Group Leaders

Your Role as a Group Leader in Realm

Realm is a tool that supports, not replaces, your relational leadership. As a group leader, Realm helps you:

- Communicate clearly and consistently
- Keep track of participants
- Share resources and updates
- Reduce administrative burden

Accessing Your Group

As a group leader, you will have leader-level access to your group page, allowing you to:

****Most of these are required to be done via the web browser rather than the app****

- View and manage group members
- Send messages to the group
- Post updates or announcements
- Share files and links (if enabled)

If you do not see your group or believe your permissions are incorrect, contact church staff.

For more information – visit the Group Leader Guide

<https://help.acst.com/en/realm/guides/leaders/group-leader-guide>

Communicating with Your Group

Realm makes group communication simple and centralized. All communication will go to your email that is associated with your profile. You can also find this email in your inbox within the Realm app.

You can:

- Send messages to the entire group or selected members
- Choose email, in-app messaging, or both
- Keep communication in one consistent place
- Attach files, photos, agendas or links

Best practice: Use Realm as your primary communication tool so messages are not missed or scattered across platforms; Attach files rather than imbed in the email; use Realm via web browser rather than the app.

Sharing Resources

Realm allows you to share:

- Meeting notes
- Study materials
- Schedules or calendars
- Links to external resources

This ensures all group members have access to the same information, even if they miss a meeting.

Tips for Everyone

- Check Realm regularly for updates and messages
- Keep your profile information current
- Use Realm to strengthen connection, not complicate it
- Reach out to church staff if you need help or have questions

Part III: Skills & Interest

Skills & Interests: Why This Is Important

Each person is a unique member of the body of Christ with a variety of skills and interests. By entering your skills and interests as part of your Realm profile, the church will be able to help you identify the serving roles and serving teams within Hayes Barton UMC that best utilize and enhance your skills and interests. Church leaders will be able to determine, based on skills and interests, which members are a good match for the volunteer opportunities available.

This matching process between an individual's skills and interests and the serving roles, promotes strengths and capabilities within our ministries. As an individual, it sets you up for success because you'll be a happier, more involved servant doing things you are good at or are interested in; for our church collectively, the success comes from being able to more fully accomplish our mission to serve our neighbors, seek God's will for our lives, and make disciples of Jesus Christ to transform the world.

Directions for Adding Skills & Interests on Your Profile In Realm

On Realm Connect App on iPhone

- Click More (...) icon at the bottom right of your screen
- Click your picture (or initials) in the round icon in the top left of your screen
- A list of menu options will appear; click "My Profile"
- Your profile will appear; scroll to the bottom of the page to see "Manage Skills" and "Manage Interests"
- Click "Manage Skills" to see a list of Skills; check (click in the box) your skills; scroll through the list and remember to "Save" your choices
- You will be taken back to the screen where you can click "Manage Interests"; check your interests; scroll through the list and "Save" your choices

On Realm Connect App on Android

- Click the "sandwich" (3 horizontal lines in upper left corner)
- Scroll down the list of menu options and select "Profile"
- Your profile will appear; scroll to the bottom of the page to see "Edit Skills" and "Edit Interest"
- Click "Edit Skills" to see a list of Skills; check (click in the box) your skills; scroll through the list and remember to "Save" your choices
- You will be taken back to the screen where you can click "Edit Interest"; check your interests; scroll through the list and "Save" your choices

On Realm on a browser on your computer (click here to go directly to the "Serving" page)

- Sign onto Realm; a list of options will appear on the left side of the page (under Connect)
- Click "Serving"
- In the section that contains the words "Skills" and "Interests", click the 3 dots (...), then click "Edit"
- Check (click in the box) your skills; scroll through the list and click "Next" when done
- Check (click in the box) your interests; scroll through the list and click "Done" when finished

While in your serving profile, you can update your "Serving Preferences" as well. You can specify days you can (or can not) serve during the week as well. You can also browse opportunities by role and serving team.

Need Help?

If you have questions or need assistance with Realm:

- Contact Amy Piland
- Reach out to your group leader

Realm support is here to help you stay connected—please don't hesitate to ask.

Note: This guide reflects current Realm practices at Hayes Barton United Methodist Church. Access and features may vary based on role and permissions.

Realm Quick Start for HBUMC Members

Welcome to Realm at Hayes Barton United Methodist Church!

Realm is our secure, members-only platform designed to help you stay connected to the life of the church.

Get Started in 5–10 Minutes

1. Accept Your Invitation

Look for an email invitation from Realm and follow the link to create your account.

2. Set Up Your Profile

- Add or update your contact information
- Upload a photo so others can recognize you
- Review privacy settings and choose what others can see

3. Explore Your Connections

- Check the **Directory** to find other members
- View the **Groups** you belong to

4. Download the Mobile App (Optional)

Available for iOS and Android for easy access on the go.

What You'll Use Realm For

- Receiving church and group communications
- Staying connected with your small groups or ministry teams
- Updating your contact and household information
- Viewing group messages, files, and schedules
- Giving online and viewing your giving history (if enabled)

How Hayes Barton Uses Realm

Realm *is* used for:

- Official church and group communication
- Managing group participation and engagement
- Keeping member contact information up to date
- Supporting community, care, and connection

Realm *is not* used for:

- Social media or public posting
- Mass announcements to the general public
- Political messaging or fundraising outside church purposes
- Replacing personal, pastoral, or relational connections

Need Help? Contact Amy Piland or New Cheryl

Realm Quick Start for HBUMC Group Leaders

Realm is a tool to support your leadership and reduce administrative work—so you can focus on people.

Weekly Leader Essentials

1. Log In and Open Your Group Page

Review your group dashboard and member list.

2. Communicate Consistently

- Send a weekly message or announcement
- Use Realm as your primary communication tool

3. Share Resources

Upload files or post links so everyone has access—even if they miss a meeting.

4. Watch Engagement

Note participation, questions, or pastoral needs that may require follow-up.

What You'll Use Realm For as a Leader

- Messaging your entire group or selected members
- Viewing and supporting group participation
- Sharing schedules, study materials, and updates
- Keeping communication centralized and consistent

How Hayes Barton Uses Realm (Leaders)

Realm *is* used for:

- Primary communication with your group
- Supporting transparency and continuity
- Reducing fragmented communication (texts, emails, spreadsheets)
- Strengthening connection between leaders, members, and staff

Realm is *not* used for:

- Sensitive pastoral counseling documentation
- Informal or off-the-record conversations
- Decision-making outside church governance processes
- Personal contact lists unrelated to church ministry

Please treat all information in Realm as **confidential** and use it only for ministry-related purposes.